



CATALOGUE NO. 6323.0

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### TRADE UNION STATISTICS, AUSTRALIA 30 JUNE 1986

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#### MAIN FEATURES

At 30 June 1986 there were 326 reporting trade unions with a total membership of 3,186,200 or 55 per cent of all employees. By comparison, at 30 June 1985 there were 323 trade unions with a combined membership of 3,154,200 which accounted for 57 per cent of total employees.

Eight unions, with 80,000 or more members each, accounted for 31 per cent of total membership. The 112 unions with fewer than 500 members each, accounted for only 0.6 per cent of total membership.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

##### Introduction

The figures in this publication have been compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions in respect of their membership and State of operation as at 30 June from 1985 and as at 31 December in previous years. The collection was changed to an end of June basis to correspond with other statistics which are on a financial year basis.

##### Scope and coverage

2. Current lists of reporting trade unions are maintained by reference to lists used in previous years and to trade unions registered under the provisions of the various Federal and State industrial arbitration Acts, trade union Acts, etc.; from names of unions reported to be engaged in conciliation and arbitration proceedings, etc.; and from reports in trade journals, trade union and employer periodicals, newspapers and other publications. It should be noted that not all reporting trade unions are registered under the relevant Federal or State industrial arbitration legislation or State trade union Acts (see paragraph 11 below).

3. For trade unions that are branches of larger trade unions, only the larger organisation is counted to reduce the possibility of duplication in the figures of the number of unions and members. An interstate or federated trade union (i.e. a union with members in more than one State or Territory) is treated as a separate union in each State or Territory in which it has members, but is counted only once in the Australian total (see Table 1). Unions with interstate associations which are not strictly branches of a common organisation are counted as separate unions in the totals for Australia.

4. The published number of reporting trade unions varies from year to year as a result of amalgamations of unions, unions ceasing to operate, new unions being formed, existing organisations changing their status such that it brings them within the scope of the definition of a trade union (see paragraph 5), and existing unions reporting for the first time. At 30 June 1986, there were 326 reporting trade unions compared with 323 at 30 June 1985. This increase resulted from the inclusion of 10 unions (total membership of 9,902) reporting for the first time, the amalgamation of 6 unions with other existing unions and 1 union ceasing to operate.

##### Definitions

5. For the purpose of these statistics a *trade union* is defined as an organisation, consisting predominantly of employees, the principal activities of which include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members. Non-operating unions or branches, i.e. those with no members at the date of collection, are not included in the statistics.

6. *Membership of trade unions. Financial members* are dues paying members who are no more than 6 months in arrears in payment of dues. *The total number of members* includes all persons (financial, unfinancial, honorary, etc.) regarded as members by unions.

7. Persons who are members of more than one union cannot be separately identified and are therefore counted more than once in the totals. The extent of this duplication is not known. Members of unions who work overseas are excluded from the reported membership data. Membership figures may be affected by differences in the concept of membership adopted by different unions or by the same union at different times. (See paragraph 9 below.)

8. *Proportion of total employees.* The approximate percentages of wage and salary earners in employment (i.e. employees) who were members of trade unions are shown in Table 3. From 30 June 1985, the proportions of employees have been calculated from estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings published in *Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia* (6248.0). These estimates of employees have been adjusted by adding estimates of employees in private sector agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and in private households employing staff, from the Labour Force Survey. Prior to 30 June 1985, estimates of employees from the *Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0),



have been used. The percentages shown should be regarded as giving only a broad indication of the extent of union membership among employees, because they are based on estimates of *employed* wage and salary earners and the degree of unemployment of reported union members will affect the percentages for a particular year and comparisons over time.

#### Comparability of series

9. Comparability of figures for different years may be affected by a number of factors. As stated in paragraph 7, there may be duplication in the count of members. This duplication may vary over time. Union rules on membership may follow different concepts and practices and this may be reflected in the level and fluctuations of the figures reported. Unions reported financial and total membership separately for the first time as at 30 June 1985, in previous years some unions confined their reported membership to 'financial' members whilst others included various other members. Individual unions may or may not include in their reported membership unemployed members, members who have retired from the labour force, disabled members, members with dues in arrears (who may be kept on union books for varying lengths of time), etc.

10. Membership of trade unions is shown separately for males and females for each State and Territory. The subdivision of total membership into males and females is not precise because some trade unions are unable to state the exact number of males and females among their members. The subdivision of total membership by States and Territories is also not precise because some unions in the Territories are affiliated with State organisations and their membership is reported under the heading of that State.

#### Organisations registered under industrial arbitration legislation

11. Details of employee organisations registered under the *Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904* as at

30 June 1986 (with comparable figures for 30 June 1985 shown in brackets) are: 146 (149) employee unions with membership of 2,571,500 (2,581,800) representing 81 (82) per cent of total membership of all reporting trade unions in Australia.

12. Industrial legislation in most States also provides for the registration of employee associations. Some employee associations are registered under more than one Act.

#### Related publications

*Employed Wage And Salary Earners, Australia* (6248.0) — issued quarterly

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0) — issued monthly (\$1.20, \$2.10 incl. postage)

*Trade Union Members, Australia, March to May 1982* (6325.0)

*Labour Statistics, Australia* (6101.0)

13. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

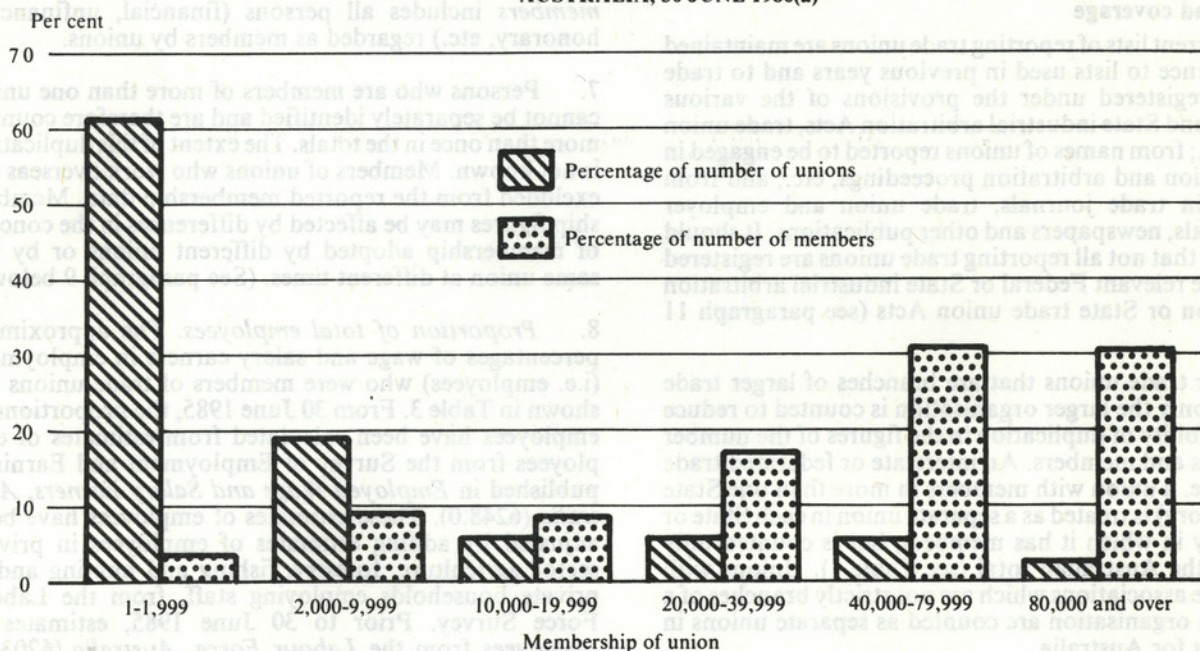
#### Symbols and other usages

— Break in continuity of series

14. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

IAN CASTLES  
Australian Statistician

TRADE UNIONS : PERCENTAGE OF UNIONS AND MEMBERS ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP  
AUSTRALIA, 30 JUNE 1986(a)



(a) For details see tables 5 and 6, page 5.



TABLE 1. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS, STATES, TERRITORIES AND AUSTRALIA

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.(a)
31 December									
1981	191	173	138	141	149	123	75	91	324
1982	187	175	142	143	148	124	78	93	322
1983	186	174	138	141	146	123	75	92	319
1984	190	179	138	142	148	127	75	89	329
30 June									
1985	183	177	138	143	146	130	76	83	323
1986	182	176	141	144	147	135	78	87	326

(a) Australian totals do not equal the sum of the States and Territories, see paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 2. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS, STATES, TERRITORIES AND AUSTRALIA ('000)

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
MALES									
31 December									
1981	772.3	522.9	285.6	178.0	156.4	63.4	14.2	36.6	2,029.4
1982	745.7	533.4	296.0	176.0	161.2	61.4	13.7	36.9	2,024.4
1983	730.6	529.1	299.6	174.3	162.2	61.1	13.9	36.4	2,007.2
1984	741.4	545.5	300.9	171.5	166.2	62.2	13.6	40.0	2,041.2
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	660.0	488.3	283.3	161.0	148.9	57.5	11.1	37.2	1,847.4
Total	756.2	568.0	328.8	183.2	166.3	64.1	13.9	41.2	2,121.6
1986—Financial	664.4	527.4	270.6	162.1	152.4	60.9	11.4	42.9	1,892.1
Total	757.0	586.9	309.7	178.7	167.8	65.2	13.9	47.2	2,126.5
FEMALES									
31 December									
1981	373.3	248.8	135.4	85.1	72.7	26.3	6.0	17.0	964.7
1982	381.9	256.7	142.7	82.7	73.3	26.7	6.5	17.5	988.0
1983	378.1	259.1	130.6	83.5	75.3	27.6	6.7	17.2	978.0
1984	373.1	260.5	133.9	87.0	78.0	29.1	6.8	18.9	987.3
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	357.0	269.0	113.7	85.7	74.4	29.4	7.0	19.2	955.4
Total	392.7	290.5	124.1	89.9	78.2	29.8	7.4	20.0	1,032.6
1986—Financial	357.0	277.6	123.6	85.8	80.8	28.8	6.2	18.7	978.4
Total	391.3	299.5	137.7	89.7	84.4	29.2	7.3	20.5	1,059.7
PERSONS									
31 December									
1981	1,145.6	771.7	421.0	263.1	229.1	89.8	20.1	53.7	2,994.1
1982	1,127.5	790.1	438.8	258.7	234.5	88.1	20.2	54.4	3,012.4
1983	1,108.7	788.2	430.2	257.8	237.5	88.6	20.6	53.6	2,985.2
1984	1,114.5	806.0	434.8	258.4	244.2	91.3	20.3	58.9	3,028.5
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	1,016.9	757.4	397.1	246.8	223.3	86.9	18.1	56.3	2,802.8
Total	1,148.9	858.5	452.9	273.1	244.5	93.9	21.3	61.2	3,154.2
1986—Financial	1,021.4	805.0	394.1	247.9	233.2	89.7	17.5	61.6	2,870.5
Total	1,148.2	886.4	447.5	268.5	252.2	94.4	21.2	67.7	3,186.2

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.



**TABLE 3. TRADE UNION MEMBERS : PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES(a), STATES, TERRITORIES AND AUSTRALIA (per cent)**

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
<b>MALES</b>									
31 December(b)									
1981	64	58	57	62	54	67	43	67	60
1982	64	61	59	63	55	70	41	71	62
1983	65	61	59	62	55	68	43	64	61
1984	64	60	60	60	55	68	42	66	61
30 June(c)(d)									
1985	67	65	65	65	57	72	44	67	65
1986	66	63	61	63	55	71	40	73	63
<b>FEMALES</b>									
31 December(b)									
1981	50	44	46	47	42	52	31	42	47
1982	53	46	48	46	40	52	32	45	48
1983	52	46	43	46	40	55	33	39	47
1984	48	44	43	46	40	53	35	40	45
30 June(c)(d)									
1985	51	47	39	46	39	51	33	38	46
1986	48	44	41	45	39	47	26	38	44
<b>PERSONS</b>									
31 December(b)									
1981	59	53	53	56	49	62	38	56	54
1982	60	55	55	56	50	63	38	60	56
1983	60	55	53	56	49	63	39	53	56
1984	57	54	53	55	49	62	39	55	55
30 June(c)(d)									
1985	60	57	55	57	49	64	39	54	57
1986	58	55	53	55	48	61	34	57	55

(a) The method used to estimate total employees has been amended. For details see paragraph 8 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Based on estimates of employees from the Labour Force Survey. (c) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series. (d) Based on estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings.

**TABLE 4. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF STATES AND/OR TERRITORIES OF OPERATION, AUSTRALIA**

	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six or more	Two or more	Total all unions
<b>NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS</b>								
31 December								
1981	183	9	6	13	24	89	141	324
1982	178	11	3	12	16	102	144	322
1983	176	11	5	11	15	101	143	319
1984	186	12	3	11	17	100	143	329
30 June								
1985	183	8	3	12	15	102	140	323
1986	187	6	3	13	14	103	139	326
<b>NUMBER OF MEMBERS ('000)</b>								
31 December								
1981	540.5	57.0	25.4	165.2	121.0	2,085.1	2,453.6	2,994.1
1982	502.9	21.2	55.7	132.2	135.4	2,165.0	2,509.5	3,012.4
1983	531.9	22.9	56.3	132.1	133.6	2,108.5	2,453.3	2,985.2
1984	540.7	23.9	53.7	138.7	143.2	2,128.4	2,487.9	3,028.5
30 June(a)								
1985	541.7	20.9	52.7	142.4	208.7	2,187.7	2,612.5	3,154.2
1986	540.3	20.1	54.4	94.0	179.5	2,297.8	2,645.8	3,186.2

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.



TABLE 5. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF UNIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE, AUSTRALIA

Number of members	31 December—				30 June(a)—			
					1985		1986	
	Number of unions				Number of unions	Number of unions	Per cent of total unions	Cumulative per cent of total unions
	1981	1982	1983	1984				
Under 100	36	46	41	41	35	40	12.3	12.3
100 and under 250	46	38	39	45	42	40	12.3	24.5
250 and under 500	26	25	25	24	30	32	9.8	34.4
500 and under 1,000	48	43	47	52	47	43	13.2	47.5
1,000 and under 2,000	45	45	41	41	41	45	13.8	61.3
2,000 and under 5,000	38	41	41	40	41	39	12.0	73.3
5,000 and under 10,000	22	21	21	22	22	23	7.1	80.4
10,000 and under 20,000	20	21	22	20	21	19	5.8	86.2
20,000 and under 30,000	12	9	13	13	10	12	3.7	89.9
30,000 and under 40,000	9	10	7	6	7	7	2.1	92.0
40,000 and under 50,000	7	9	8	11	10	10	3.1	95.1
50,000 and under 80,000	8	6	5	4	7	8	2.5	97.5
80,000 and over	7	8	9	10	10	8	2.5	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

TABLE 6. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

Number of members	31 December—				30 June(a)—			
					1985		1986	
	Number of members				Number of members	Number of members	Average number of members per union	Per cent of total members
	1981	1982	1983	1984				Cumulative per cent of total members
— '000—								
Under 100	1.7	2.5	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.0	0.1	0.1
100 and under 250	7.3	6.1	6.0	7.0	6.7	6.6	0.2	0.3
250 and under 500	9.8	9.1	8.9	8.4	10.7	11.8	0.4	0.6
500 and under 1,000	33.4	28.8	33.9	37.2	33.9	31.1	0.7	1.6
1,000 and under 2,000	64.3	61.3	57.7	56.8	56.1	63.0	1.4	3.4
2,000 and under 5,000	129.0	132.0	132.0	127.3	128.9	130.1	3.3	7.7
5,000 and under 10,000	156.1	147.3	149.3	156.1	149.4	158.8	6.9	12.7
10,000 and under 20,000	287.4	305.6	328.1	289.5	301.3	275.0	14.5	21.3
20,000 and under 30,000	280.2	207.4	315.2	307.3	234.8	294.6	24.6	30.5
30,000 and under 40,000	316.5	354.6	254.7	207.1	242.1	251.3	35.9	38.4
40,000 and under 50,000	329.2	402.7	363.2	495.7	452.3	455.8	45.6	52.7
50,000 and under 80,000	531.6	405.6	320.9	244.5	408.6	529.4	66.2	69.3
80,000 and over	847.4	949.4	1,013.4	1,089.5	1,127.7	976.8	122.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,994.1</b>	<b>3,012.4</b>	<b>2,985.2</b>	<b>3,028.5</b>	<b>3,154.2</b>	<b>3,186.2</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

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TABLE 1.2-DETAILED MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Number of members	31 December				31 January			
	1987	1988	1989	1990	1987	1988	1989	1990
Under 100	38	46	48	41	35	40	40	12.3
100 and under 250	46	56	58	46	45	50	40	12.7
250 and under 500	38	38	37	30	30	35	35	14.5
500 and under 1,000	46	46	43	41	41	43	43	47.2
1,000 and under 2,000	47	47	47	41	41	41	41	47.5
2,000 and under 5,000	38	38	41	41	41	41	41	12.5
5,000 and under 10,000	22	22	21	21	21	21	21	80.4
10,000 and under 20,000	20	21	21	20	21	21	19	80.5
20,000 and under 30,000	12	12	9	13	13	12	12	89.9
30,000 and under 40,000	7	7	10	7	7	7	7	93.0
40,000 and under 50,000	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	97.1
50,000 and over	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	97.2
Total	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	100.0



TABLE 1.3-DETAILED MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Number of members	31 December				31 January			
	1987	1988	1989	1990	1987	1988	1989	1990
Under 100	1.7	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.1
100 and under 250	7.5	8.1	8.0	7.0	6.7	6.6	6.5	0.3
250 and under 500	9.2	9.1	8.9	8.4	10.7	11.3	11.3	0.8
500 and under 1,000	37.4	38.6	37.9	37.2	37.8	38.1	38.0	1.6
1,000 and under 2,000	41.3	41.3	41.3	36.8	41.3	41.3	41.3	3.4
2,000 and under 5,000	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.7
5,000 and under 10,000	14.7	14.7	14.7	14.7	14.7	14.7	14.7	21.3
10,000 and under 20,000	28.4	28.4	28.4	28.4	28.4	28.4	28.4	30.5
20,000 and under 30,000	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	30.5
30,000 and under 40,000	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	32.7
40,000 and under 50,000	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	30.7
50,000 and over	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) See paragraph 1 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the basis of the data in this table.